NOTE IX.

ARDEA PURPUREA MADAGASCARIENSIS, NOV. SUBSP. FROM MADAGASCAR

BY

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The purple heron of Madagascar is a much darker bird than *Ardea purpurea* L. of Europe and Africa. The fore part of the throat and the neck are streaked with black like in this species, but the black streaks are broader and more numerous. The black lines, running down each side of the neck are much broader. The upper parts are olivaceous-brown; back, ends of inner secondaries and tail blackish brown with green gloss, especially on the back. The narrow, elongated plumes depending from the scapulars and inner secondaries are not hoary grey and light rufous like in *Ardea purpurea* L., but brownish grey and darker rufous. The lateral feathers of the lower neck are olivaceous brownish grey, not slaty grey like in *purpurea*.

In the Leyden Museum there are two specimens from Madagascar: a male from the northwest coast, collected by van Dam, and a female, showing the same differences, collected at Foulpointe, East Madagascar, 2 November 1875 by J. Audebert. The first-named specimen has already been mentioned by Hartlaub, as being of a very intensive coloration (Vög. Madag. 1877, p. 296). The measurements are: wing ♂ 355, ♀ 345; culmen ♂ 140, ♀ 132; tarso-met. ♂ 124, ♀ 112 mm.

Dr. Sharpe in the Catalogue of Birds, vol. XXVI, 1898, p. 63, stated that *Ardea purpurea* is wintering in most parts of Africa and in Madagascar; as to Madagascar I presume, that all the specimens which have been recorded from that island, belong to the darker form, which is likely peculiar to that island; that *Ardea purpurea* is also nesting in South Africa has been observed by Dr. J. Kirk, who found this species breeding at the Zambesi (Ibis, 1864, p. 332).

Of *Ardea purpurea* L. and allies there are in the Leyden Museum the following specimens:

Ardea purpurea L., 20 specimens from the Netherlands, 3 from other parts of Europe, 1 specimen from western Africa, Goldcoast, and 2 from South Africa, Cape.

Ardea purpurea manilensis Meyen, 1 specimen from the Philippines, 5 from Java, 2 from Bawean Isl., 1 from Kangean Isl., 3 from Sumatra, 1 from Borneo, 6 from Celebes, 1 from Soembawa, 1 from Rotti near Timor and 1 from Hindostan.

Ardea purpurea madagascariensis Van Oort, two specimens from Madagascar.

Leyden Museum, February 1910.